

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed on August 21, 2007 in which claims 1-7 and 14-17 were rejected, claims 8-13 were objected to, and claims 18-20 were allowed. With this Amendment, claims 1, 7, and 18 are amended and claim 21 is added. All amendments and the new claim are fully supported by the specification and drawings. No new matter is added. Claims 1-21 are pending in this application. In light of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests advancement of this application to allowance.

Claim Objections

Claim 1 was objected to for missing the word “the” in lines 7 and 9. Claim 1 has been amended such that the objection is now moot. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – §102(b)

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Tanaka (U.S. Patent No. 5,928,175). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Tanaka discloses a device comprising a hip lacing band 31 and two femoral region winding bands 32 and 33. The hip lacing band 31 is wrapped around the pelvic region of the patient while the femoral bands 32 and 33 are wrapped around the thigh region of individual legs of the patient (col. 4, lines 12-24 and FIGS. 3-4).

In sharp contrast, claim 1 recites a device for bracing the pelvic region of a patient including upper and lower straps. The lower strap covers and encircles at least part of a second region, where the second region includes a lower pelvic region and an adjoining crutch region of the patient. Tanaka fails to disclose a lower strap that covers and encircles at least part of a region including a lower pelvic region and an adjoining crutch region of a patient, as recited in Applicant’s claim 1.

Claim 1 is allowable for at least these reasons. Consideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – §103(a)

Claims 2-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Tanaka. Claims 14-17 were rejected as being obvious over Tanaka in view of Coppess (U.S. Patent No. 4,580,555). Applicant traverses the rejections.

First, claims 2-7 ultimately depend from claim 1. Claim 1 is allowable for at least the reasons discussed above. Furthermore, it would not have been obvious to modify the device of Tanaka as recited in claim 1. Tanaka concerns the treatment of “lame hips” (col. 1, lines 11-13) or preventing sciatic nerve irritation so as to correct posture in the directions of arrow 58 and 59 in FIG. 5 (col. 4, lines 34-52). Tanaka fails to disclose, teach and/or suggest a reason to modify the device in the manner recited in claim 1. Such a modification would not have been obvious to one skilled in the art. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2-7 is respectfully requested.

Second, claims 14-17 ultimately depend from claim 1. Claim 1 is allowable for at least the reasons discussed above. More specifically, neither Tanaka or Coppess disclose and/or teach the invention recited in Applicant’s claim 1. As discussed above, Tanaka does not disclose or teach a device for bracing the pelvic region of a patient including upper and lower straps, where the lower strap covers and encircles at least part of a second region, and where the second region includes a lower pelvic region and an adjoining crutch region of the patient. The Examiner cited Coppess as disclosing a device where the length of each strap may be adjusted. Thus, Coppess does not overcome the deficiencies of Tanaka.

Withdrawal of the rejections is requested. Applicant does not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejections and reserves the right to make additional arguments as may be necessary.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 8-13 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 8-13 ultimately depend from claim 1. Claim 1 is allowable for at least the reasons discussed herein. Therefore, claims 8-13 are also allowable and withdrawal of the objection is requested.

Allowed Claims

The allowance of claims 18-20 is gratefully acknowledged. Claim 18 is amended to clarify the intended meaning of the claim. The amendment is not intended to substantively change the scope of the claim. Therefore, continued allowance of claims 18-20 is respectfully requested.

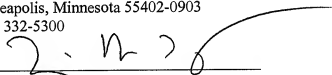
Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance. There may be additional reasons that the pending subject matter is patentably distinct from the cited references in addition to those discussed herein. Applicant reserves the right to raise any such arguments in the future. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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